April, 13, 2017

The Trump Administration plans to eliminate federal funding for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). This threatens the legal services in the Evansville, Indiana community, and is inconsistent with the Hoosier way of life.

The Evansville Bar Association believes in the elevation of the standing and dignity of the profession of law. Stripping the LSC, and in turn groups that provide legal services because of the LSC, lowers the standing and dignity of the profession.

The LSC assists and represents victims of domestic abuse, those with mental health issues, the physically disabled, the elderly, veterans and others who simply cannot afford legal services. Such a concept is very much an Evansville, Southern Indiana and Hoosier value. In fact, it is an American value. In the past five years, the Evansville office of Indiana Legal Services, which provides legal help in the eleven counties in southwest Indiana, closed 50,633 matters. In other words, it handled that many cases. Tens of thousands of the region’s most vulnerable residents received help with domestic violence matters, housing disputes, debt and consumer fraud cases, and health care access.

Our bar association lawyers donate time, talent and financial assistance year after year to our local legal services organizations. However, this is not enough to meet the vast and critical needs of our community members who need legal assistance. As a result, funding from Congress makes up the gap and ensures at least some of our needy and often poverty stricken residents can obtain the legal services they require.

The Evansville Bar Association has a longstanding history, dating back to its 1911 roots, of support for civil legal aid, which helps ensure access to justice. Access to justice is for all. The Evansville Bar Association opposes stripping the LSC funding.